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## Reports

### Item#1

China, Russia and the US Juggle Soft and Hard Power. YaleGlobal. Alistair Burnett. January 8, 2015.

Reliance on soft power requires measured patience. Nations want their own way, and the world has seen a marked resurgence in use of hard power, suggests Alistair Burnett. The United States intervenes in Iraq and Syria; Russia has annexed Crimea and encourages rebels in eastern Ukraine, while China asserts broad territorial claims in the East and South China seas. “Yet, not so long ago, talk in diplomatic, academic and journalistic circles focused on the growing importance of soft power in international relations,” Burnett writes. Harvard Professor Joseph Nye coined the terms “soft power” and “smart power,” the latter a combination of military power with cultural influences, diplomacy, heritage and more. While using military power, nations often couch their actions with soft-power language. Yet so much soft power – offerings or perceptions – is unintentional, rising naturally from a populace. Soft power can take a long time to develop with the results never sure.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/china-russia-and-us-juggle-soft-and-hard-power> [HTML format, various paging].

### Item#2

Charlie Hebdo Attacks Stir Resolve and Contemplation. YaleGlobal. Stathis N. Kalyvas. January 15, 2015.

Terrorists hope to incite fear, panic and capitulation, but so far Europe is resisting such response after surprise attacks on the Paris offices of a satirical newspaper, Charlie Hebdo, and a Kosher grocery store. “And because they are so shocking, these attacks tempt those targeted into reacting in a kneejerk way, ultimately playing into the hands of the attackers and becoming self-fulfilling prophecies of sort,” argues political scientist Stathis N. Kalyvas. “In fact, this is the greatest threat they pose.” He anticipates a measured response: the French reconfirming the value of free expression; French political leaders doing more to integrate its Muslim population, the largest among EU nations; as well as research on radicalization and proposals for prison reform. He also anticipates calls to end the civil war in Syria that draws extremists and greater cooperation on security among EU members. So far, terrorists have exposed Europe’s steely resolve to preserve the values of freedom of expression and respect for human rights.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/charlie-hebdo-attacks-stir-resolve-and-contemplation> [HTML format, various paging].

### Item#3

The “Islamic State” Crisis and U.S. Policy. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Kenneth Katzman. January 8, 2015.

The Islamic State is a transnational Sunni Islamist insurgent and terrorist group that has expanded its control over areas of parts of Iraq and Syria since 2013. It threatens the governments of both countries and potentially several other countries in the region. The emerging international response to the threat

is multifaceted and includes coalition military strikes and assistance plans. There is debate over the degree to which the Islamic State organization might represent a direct terrorist threat to the U.S. homeland or to U.S. facilities and personnel in the region.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R43612.pdf> [PDF format, 41 pages, 900.86 KB].

#### Item#4

Rhetoric, Ideology and Organizational Structure of the Taliban Movement. U.S. Institute of Peace. Michael Semple. January 5, 2015.

The report examines the evolution of the Taliban case for armed struggle and the minimal adjustments Taliban rhetoricians made to cope with the impending political change in Afghanistan in 2014. It considers how the Taliban might make a case for peace, should they take the political decision to engage in negotiations.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/PW102-Rhetoric-Ideology-and-Organizational-Structure-of-the-Taliban-Movement.pdf> [PDF format, 36 pages, 2.8 MB].

#### Item#5

Terrorism Worries Little Changed; Most Give Government Good Marks for Reducing Threat. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. January 12, 2015.

In the aftermath of deadly terrorist attacks in Paris, and months after the start of U.S. airstrikes against ISIS, there has been little change in the public's worries about an imminent terrorist attack in the United States. One-in-four (25%) are very worried about a domestic terrorist attack happening "soon," while about four-in-ten (39%) are somewhat worried; 36% are not too worried or not at all worried. That balance of opinion has not significantly changed since last July. The long-term trend on terrorism concerns has been fairly stable, except on a few occasions, since the fall of 2001.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.people-press.org/files/2015/01/1-12-15-Terrorism-Release.pdf> [PDF format, 21 pages, 506.47 KB].

#### Item#6

American Public Attitudes Toward ISIS and Syria. Brookings Institution. Shibley Telhamy. January 8, 2014.

Although the fight against the Islamic State, or ISIS, found broad support in Congress and amongst a growing international coalition, questions remain about America's commitment to a mission to "degrade and ultimately destroy" this terrorist organization, and about the efficacy of the current military strategy in stopping ISIS from seizing territory and massacring civilians. The survey American public attitudes toward the rise of the Islamic State and the U.S. campaign against the group in Syria and Iraq.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2015/01/08%20american%20opinion%20poll%20isis%20syria%20telhami/isis\\_report.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2015/01/08%20american%20opinion%20poll%20isis%20syria%20telhami/isis_report.pdf) [PDF format, 9 pages, 925 KB].

#### Item#7

The Global Risks Report 2015. World Economic Forum. January

The 2015 edition of the Global Risks report completes a decade of highlighting the most significant long-term risks worldwide, drawing on the perspectives of experts and global decision-makers. Over that time, analysis has moved from risk identification to thinking through risk interconnections and the potentially cascading effects that result. This year's report underscores potential causes as well as solutions to global risks.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

[http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Global\\_Risks\\_2015\\_Report.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_2015_Report.pdf) [PDF format, 69 pages, 3.6 MB].

#### Item#8

The Changing Face of America's Electorate: Political Implications of Shifting Demographics. Center for American Progress. Patrick Oakford. January 6, 2015.

Changing electoral demographics will have noticeable effects on the 2016 elections. In 2016, to win the presidency, as well as many U.S. Senate races, both parties will need to secure substantial support from voters of color, according to the report.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2016VotersUPDATED.pdf> [PDF format, 18 pages, 555.77 KB].

#### Item#9

Faith on the Hill. Pew Research Religion & Public Life Project. January 5, 2015.

When the new, 114th Congress is sworn in on Jan. 6, 2015, Republicans will control both chambers of the legislative body for the first time since the 109th Congress (2005-2006). Yet, despite the sea change in party control, there is relatively little change in the overall religious makeup of Congress, according to the study. More than nine-in-ten members of the House and Senate (92%) are Christian, and about 57% are Protestant, roughly the same as in the 113th Congress (90% and 56%, respectively). About three-in-ten members (31%) are Catholic, the same as in the previous Congress.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/01/05/faith-on-the-hill/> [HTML format with links].

#### Item#10

Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the Continent in 2015. Brookings Institution. January 2015.

The year 2015 will be an eventful one for the more than one billion people living in Africa. From elections to the post-2015 development agenda, the Brookings Africa Growth Initiative experts and colleagues identify what they consider to be the key issues for the continent in the coming year.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Reports/2015/01/foresight%20africa/foresight%20africa%20full%20report%20FINAL.pdf> [PDF format, 62 pages, 2.74 MB].

#### Item#11

Obama Job Rating Ticks Higher, Views of Nation's Economy Turn More Positive. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. January 14, 2015.

President Obama enters the seventh year of his presidency in a familiar position when compared with his recent predecessors. His 47% job approval rating places him squarely between George W. Bush (33%) and Bill Clinton (63%) at similar points in their second terms. Obama's rating is comparable to Ronald Reagan's in January 1987 (49%), when Reagan was embroiled in the Iran-Contra affair. The latest survey finds that Obama's job approval has risen five points since December (42%). The president's job rating changed very little over the course of 2014.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.people-press.org/files/2015/01/1-14-15-Political-release.pdf> [PDF format, 50 pages, 856.90 KB].

#### Item#12

Falling Oil Prices and US Economic Activity: Implications for the Future. Resources for the Future. Stephen P.A. Brown. December 2014.

In short, recent changes to world oil prices will help consumers by giving them more disposable income. In contrast, lower oil prices will hurt U.S. energy producers and the states that rely heavily on the energy industry. Although the effects of the oil price declines are uneven across the United States, the increase in disposable income will be a mild stimulus to U.S. economic activity, according to the report.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.rff.org/RFF/Documents/RFF-IB-14-06.pdf> [PDF format, 9 pages, 840.45 KB].

#### Item#13

Costs of Selected Policies to Address Air Pollution in China. RAND Corporation. Keith Crane and Zhimin Mao. January 2015.

Air pollution has been one of the most pernicious consequences of China's last three decades of economic transformation and growth. Concentrations of pollutants exceed standards recommended by the World Health Organization in virtually every major urban area. The large costs of air pollution are driven by health impacts and loss of productivity, running 6.5 percent of China's gross domestic product each year between 2000 and 2010, and rising as China's population becomes more urbanized and productive. The report estimates the costs of three measures to reduce air pollution in China: replacing

coal with natural gas for residential and commercial heating, replacing half of China's coal-fired electric power generation with renewables or nuclear power, and scrapping highly polluting vehicles.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR800/RR861/RAND\\_RR861.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR800/RR861/RAND_RR861.pdf) [PDF format, 40 pages, 0.3 MB].

#### Item#14

Using Technology in Nonviolent Activism against Repression. U.S. Institute of Peace. Kelly McKone et al. January 8, 2015.

In an era of crackdowns on freedoms of peaceful assembly and association, what role can technology play in strengthening nonviolent civic mobilization? How can activists strategically apply the full range of technologies to build and sustain movements where the options for nonviolently resolving conflicts are diminishing under increased repression? The report explores avenues for engagement between activists and external actors to use technology in support of movement building.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR357-Using-Technology-in-Nonviolent-Activism-against-Repression.pdf> [PDF format, 8 pages, 120.54 KB].

#### Item#15

Social Media Update 2014. Pew Research Internet Project. Maeve Duggan et al. January 9, 2015.

The survey finds that Facebook remains by far the most popular social media site. While its growth has slowed, the level of user engagement with the platform has increased. Other platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn saw significant increases over the past year in the proportion of online adults who now use their sites.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

[http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2015/01/PI\\_SocialMediaUpdate2014.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2015/01/PI_SocialMediaUpdate2014.pdf) [PDF format, 18 pages, 531.62 KB].